

Portsmouth School Committee Minutes

February 8, 2005

Public Session

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Twaddle, at 7:00 PM. The following members were present:

Dr. Roy Twaddle, Chair

Ms. Karen Gleason

Mrs. Terri Cortvriend

Mr. Terry Kavanagh, Vice-Chair

Mr. Duncan Ingraham

Mrs. Sylvia Wedge

Mr. Douglas Wilkey, Clerk

Also Present: Timothy Ryan, Colleen Jermain, Cindy Brown, Rick Elmasian, Patti Cofield, and Julia Beebe (PHS Student Liaison)

1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was no Chairman's Report.

2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Ryan reported that over the last few weeks, he has been analyzing

enrollment in light of our plan for the 2005-06 budget. He has concerns about the cost relative to the enrollment of Prudence Island School, and he plans to put this topic on the first agenda in March and give fair notice to all those concerned to be able to attend the meeting to discuss the issue and the options for servicing our students.

Julia Beebe reported that some confusion exists with the Title IX locker room switch during after-school sporting events. Mr. Ryan will look into the issue.

a) Teaching and Learning: Mrs. Jermain gave an update on literacy, the Rhode Island Scholars initiative, the recent high school science fair, and the Fast ForWord program that was implemented at Portsmouth Middle School and Elmhurst School. Mrs. Jermain also gave an in-depth review of the Strategic Plan draft and its implications.

b) Finance and Operations: Mrs. Brown reported that there will be an audit presentation at the Town Council meeting on February 28th, 7:00 PM, at the Town Hall. Dr. Twaddle urged the School Committee members to attend the presentation, if possible. Mrs. Brown also reported that Governor Carcieri has issued his projections of state aid for next year, and Portsmouth will see a difference in restricted funding. There will be a reduction of approximately \$30,000 in language assistance monies, which impacts the operating budget.

There will be an increase in professional development and student equity funds, both of which are restricted funds.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Wilkey to approve the minutes of the meeting held January 25, 2005, as presented. So voted 7-0.

4. BUSINESS AGENDA

A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Wilkey to approve items a-e, f-n, and o-u, as presented. So voted 7-0.

a) Teacher Retirement. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Mary G. Short, Speech/Language Pathologist at Hathaway School, effective with the last day of the 2004-05 school year.”

b) Teacher Retirement. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Deborah Buffington, Reading Teacher at Hathaway School, effective with the last day of the 2004-05 school year.”

c) Teacher Retirement. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Dwight S. Smith, Art/Music Teacher and Department Head at Portsmouth High School, effective with the last day of the 2004-05 school year.”

d) Teacher Retirement. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Ellen J. Chilabato, Physical Education/Health Teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, effective with the last day of the 2004-05 school year.”

e) Teacher Retirement. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts with deep regret the resignation for retirement of Judith A. Naugle, Grade 1 Teacher at Hathaway School, effective with the last day of the 2004-05 school year.”

f) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher A-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher A is a part-time, non-tenured teacher who was appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days, which does not constitute eligibility for continuous employment and rights of recall. Because of this, Teacher A’s position must be offered to

bargaining unit members, and teachers senior to Teacher A may opt for the position.”

g) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher B-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher B is a part-time, non-tenured teacher who was appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days, which does not constitute eligibility for continuous employment and rights of recall. Because of this, Teacher B’s position must be offered to bargaining unit members, and teachers senior to Teacher B may opt for the position.”

h) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher C-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher C is a part-time, non-tenured teacher who was appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days, which does not constitute eligibility for continuous employment and rights of recall. Because of this, Teacher C’s position must be offered to bargaining unit members, and teachers senior to Teacher C may opt for the position.”

i) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption

of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher D-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher D is a part-time, non-tenured teacher who was appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days, which does not constitute eligibility for continuous employment and rights of recall. Because of this, Teacher D’s position must be offered to bargaining unit members, and teachers senior to Teacher D may opt for the position.”

j) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher E-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher E is a part-time, non-tenured teacher who was appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days, which does not constitute eligibility for continuous employment and rights of recall. Because of this, Teacher E’s position must be offered to bargaining unit members, and teachers senior to Teacher E may opt for the position.”

k) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher F-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher F was appointed to fill a 1-year leave of absence, and the

individual Teacher F replaced may be returning.”

l) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher G-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department’s 2005-06 budget. If there is a reduction, the School Committee will have to reorganize programs, eliminate positions, and consolidate classrooms in order to operate within the total budget allocation for school operations. As a result of this reorganization and consolidation, Teacher G’s position may be eliminated or a senior teacher may opt for a position in Teacher G’s area of certification.”

m) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher H-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department’s 2005-06 budget. If there is a reduction, the School Committee will have to reorganize programs, eliminate positions, and consolidate classrooms in order to operate within the total budget allocation for school operations. As a result of this reorganization and consolidation, Teacher H’s position may be eliminated or a senior teacher may opt for a position in Teacher H’s

area of certification.”

n) Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher I-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department’s 2005-06 budget. If there is a reduction, the School Committee will have to reorganize programs, eliminate positions, and consolidate classrooms in order to operate within the total budget allocation for school operations. As a result of this reorganization and consolidation, Teacher I’s position may be eliminated or a senior teacher may opt for a position in Teacher I’s area of certification.”

o) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher J-2/8/05 formally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher J has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

p) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the

long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher K-2/8/05 for-mally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher K has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

q) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the fol-lowing resolution, “that the long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher L-2/8/05 for-mally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher L has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

r) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the fol-lowing resolution, “that the long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher M-2/8/05 for-mally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher M has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

s) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent

recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher N-2/8/05 formally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher N has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

t) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher O-2/8/05 formally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher O has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

u) Substitute Teacher Non-Renewal. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the long-term assignment of Substitute Teacher P-2/8/05 formally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that Teacher P has not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus is not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall.”

Items v and w were withdrawn from the agenda.

v) Teacher Termination. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the teaching contract of Teacher Q-2/8/05, not be renewed on June 17, 2005, or the last day of the 2004-05 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is the desire of the School Department to re-open the position to seek a larger pool of more qualified candidates. Teacher Q is non-tenured and may reapply for the position.”

w) 2004-05 Budget Adjustments. The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves the proposed 2004-05 budget adjustments, as presented.” Mrs. Brown will present.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Finance. Mrs. Wedge reported that the Finance Subcommittee had their second meeting on February 8th. Mr. Wilkey reported that statewide, approximately \$40 million will have to be paid by the community into the pension fund as a result of necessary reforms. If they don't do it this year, it will be \$95 million next year. Mr. Wilkey stated that this year, before we even take up any local issues, it is approximately \$450,000 on our budget that we are responsible for. Mr. Ryan stated that based on the age that teachers can retire and their Cost of Living Adjustment, without some changes, the actuarial

calculations show a serious deficit in the plan. It affects the state and local levels. The next meeting of the Finance Subcommittee is February 15th, 5:30 PM, at the Administration Building. Mrs. Wedge requested that the school principals attend the meeting. Mr. Ryan stated that the annual budget meeting with the Town Council and School Committee is scheduled for March 1st, 7:00 PM, at the Town Hall.

b) Negotiations. Mr. Ingraham reported that the Negotiations Subcommittee met on February 8th. They have been exchanging some guidelines with NEA, and a package will be sent to them on February 9th. The subcommittee is looking into the process of hiring a professional negotiator. Mr. Ryan stated that a letter has been sent to some of the more experienced individuals who perform negotiating services to obtain information on their prior experiences, etc. A copy of our NEA contract was also sent. Ms. Gleason suggested sharing the information the negotiators submit to us with the Town. Mr. Ingraham stated that the next Negotiations Subcommittee meeting with NEA will be held on February 16th, 3:30 PM, at the Administration Building.

c) Buildings and Grounds. Mr. Kavanagh made a motion that the School Committee accepts the Request for Proposal, deleting the first full paragraph on Page 5 of 16, down through Item d, and replace with, "The successful bidder shall be expected to design a gymnasium consistent with the conceptual design which shall result

in a construction contract within the limits of the bond amount passed by the voters of the Town of Portsmouth. In the event that the design prepared by the successful bidder fails to result in a construction contract within the amount of the bond, then the contract with the bidder shall be declared void and the School Committee shall be under no obligation to the bidder for services rendered in designing the gymnasium or for other remaining services under the contract. A provision consistent with this paragraph shall be included in the contract between the School Committee and the successful bidder.” Seconded by Mrs. Wedge.

Much discussion took place. Mrs. Cortvriend amended the motion to exclude the phrase, “for services rendered in designing the gymnasium.” The amended motion states, “The successful bidder shall be expected to design a gymnasium consistent with the conceptual design which shall result in a construction contract within the limits of the bond amount passed by the voters of the Town of Portsmouth. In the event that the design prepared by the successful bidder fails to result in a construction contract within the amount of the bond, then the contract with the bidder shall be declared void and the School Committee shall be under no obligation to the bidder for other remaining services under the contract. A provision consistent with this paragraph shall be included in the contract between the School Committee and the successful bidder.” Seconded by Mr. Kavanagh. So voted 5-2. Ms. Gleason and Dr. Twaddle were opposed.

Mr. Ingraham made a seconded amendment to add to the RFP, “At the discretion of the School Committee, the architect can be required to redesign the facility at no expense to the School Department if the bids come above what is available for construction within the bond.” Seconded by Mr. Kavanagh. So voted 6-1. Ms. Gleason was opposed.

The main motion to approve the RFP, including the two amendments, was then voted on and passed 5-2. Dr. Twaddle and Ms. Gleason were opposed.

Mr. Kavanagh announced that the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 10th, was being rescheduled to Thursday, February 17th, 7:00 PM, at the Administration Building, due to the uncertainty of the weather.

d) Superintendent Search. A motion was made by Mr. Ingraham and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the charter revisions and compensation package as proposed.” So voted 6-0-1. Dr. Twaddle abstained. Mr. Ingraham asked the committee to review the flyer and provide feedback to him or Mrs. Brown by February 9th. The next meeting of the Superintendent Search subcommittee has not been scheduled.

e) Policy. Ms. Gleason stated that she and Mr. Wilkey met on

January 27th and decided that the Policy Subcommittee meetings will be held on the last Thursday of the month. The next meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, February 24th, to discuss the School Committee By-laws. Future topics of discussion include: Code of Ethics, Fundraising for Charity, Purchasing and Bidding procedure, Fraud Prevention, Maintenance Department Driving Policy, Discipline Code – Review 5000 Series, and a review NCLB Manual. Mr. Wilkey stated that they are working on health, wellness, and obesity prevention. Mrs. Brown is already working on language for the proposed policy.

A motion was made by Mr. Kavanagh and seconded by Mr. Wilkey to adjourn the meeting. So voted 7-0. Public Session adjourned at 9:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Cofield

Recording Secretary for

Douglas Wilkey, Clerk